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THE MILWAUKEE RADIO AMATEURS' CLUB, INC.

The World's Oldest Continuously Active Radio Amateur Club

NOW IN OUR 65TH SEASON

W9JK

AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE, INC.

CHARTERED AS A NON-STOCK CORPORATION BY THE STATE OF WISCONSIN

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

November 23, 1982

Ellis Saxton W4QED
701 North 38th Street
Boca Raton FL 33432

MRAC President David DeFebo has shown me your letter of November 9 and has suggested that I attempt to answer it.

Ellis, I am one of the real old timers, having joined MRAC in the twenties, have been a Life Member for a long, long time. At my next birthday I will be seventy-five. At various stages of my employment I have been able to contribute much to the MRAC. I, with the assistance of the late Gene Wille, fitted the mobile communications van you mentioned. And then as head of the Mobile Wing of MRAC I proceeded to manage it and developed the great ham radio net for the Elkhart Road Races, described by the late Jack Doyle as the greatest ham radio event he ever took part in!

Currently I am retired and active in ham radio matters as Business Manager for MRAC, Business Manager for the MRAC Training Program, and as an Assistant Director for the Central Division of ARRL.

Some of us Life Members have continued to pay the yearly dues even if not required and many contribute more bucks than that. I for one have never missed my yearly contribution. Strangely, some of our well healed LMs can travel all over the world, but saw fit to cut the dues from five to three dollars 'to use up the cash left from the convention'. Also ran free picnics and other beer parties with dozens of friends and relatives (not even hams) to suck up the beer! The club was at pretty low ebb just a half dozen years ago.

We sorely needed a better meeting place and although I was not on the selection committee, I came up with the very choice location at Wauwatosa Savings & Loan Building at 7500 West State Street, a 'safe' neighborhood and most centrally located in the Milwaukee Metropolitan area. So I became Business Manager. And I have not let the late George Ruger down. At Wauwatosa S & L George would sit at one side of the room and growl 'GO CHARLIE GO"! The Club is undergoing a revival. We are taking in new members at every meeting.

Al Belanger was President six years ago when he had a heart attack. On his hospital bed he told me he would like a real license training class so I reorganized the club training efforts - we now rent five classrooms in Wauwatosa East High School each Fall. Have 105 enrolled this semester, teach for all five license grades, have students from all the other area clubs, and, with a mere five dollar fee show a profit.

But it is a lot of work. And like all clubs, only a few do it all!

Then, ten, fifteen years ago, came the repeater revolution. And the repeater clubs garnered a lot of prospective members. Even if we had had the money, there were no workers to build and maintain a repeater.

Oh yes! I was up early on September One, standing in line at the door of the S & L from 5:45 to 9 AM to renew our use of the facilities for the year 1983. I have had to do this each year. No one else could be so foolish.

After some sad experiences with the Postal Service the membership voted to use only First Class Mail. A club bulletin to any member costs us about a quarter. And there are Life Members who have informed us that we should not waste money on them as they have lost all interest in ham radio. Life Membership was too easily gained under the old By-Laws. The revised By-Laws that will be in the new Roster require that you attain the age of 65 with twenty years of continous membership in MRAC to become a LM.

As a promtional gimmick I realized that MRAC was affiliated with ARRL longer than any other club - the League Board voted us a special plaque and Treasurer John Huntoon and his wife delivered it at thel979 Old Timers Dinner Party (boycotted by a few because it was not FREE). ARRL was again represented at our 1980 and again at our 1981 Old Timers Dinners by ARRL General Manager Dick Baldwin, a terrible way to treat our old timers, what?

As QST has pointed out, new hams today are mostly adults, very few high schoolers, and they are not joining our club for tradition, but for current services and fellowship. This show in our school also.

We would have trouble taking orders for your QSL cards because the chislers would want to put the discount back in their own pockets as they did for years with the ARRL dues rebate to clubs for dues paid.

On the other hand I passed the hat for AMSAT and MRAC now has two memberships as an affiliated organization. In fact one old timer wrote out a check for his contribution in the ammount of one hundred dollars!

We have had to pass up the production of the 1984 ARRL Convention in Milwaukee as there are just not enough hams in this community who will shoulder any work at all. Pretty sad!

Advertising is very hard to come by in this market. There is only one ham goods dealer left! Last year as we began preparations for the Roster that is now being assembled the Board decided to eliminate all advertising. However, as things moved very slowly, I personally sold the only two ads that will be in the book for a total of $210.

I'd be very interested in any changes in format that you have in mind for future Rosters. Perhaps we can consider some of them for the Roster that will follow what is now to be our 1983 edition. Of course any changes would have to be approved by the MRAC Board.

Life Members have always been designated properly (L) and Silent Keys have included all grades of members deceased since the last publication.

In my League position I receive publications and bulletins from clubs all over Wisconsin and all seem to have manpower problems.

It appears to me that handling the preparation of a roster at a distance, as with you in Florida, would greatly addto the work involved such as shipping proofs, packaging, editing and the problems of communicating with each other. And we have great problems getting anyone to do the work as it is.

Well, Old Timer, make your reply to me and I'll share it with DeFebo. An extra copy would help me even in that.

73,

H. Charles Kaetel W9SNK
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Menomonee Falls, WI 53051
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Dear Charlie:

Many thanks for your letter.

I understand the situation —

I guess I'll always cherish the memories of MRAC + wanted to do something for the Club.

However, I do not want to further complicate the situation. Therefore consider the offer(s) withdrawn.

73, Sincerely

Ellis, W4QED + ex-W9UMX